DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 180 738 RC 011 785

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TITLE	Survey of the Hispanic Population In Colorado.
INSTITUTION	Colorado State Dept. of Education, Denver.
SPONS AGENCY	Office of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C. Ethnic Heritage Studies Branch.
PUB DATE	78
NOTE	24p.; For a related document, see RC 011 786
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Biculturalism; Bilingual Education; Bilingualism; Dropouts; *Educational Attitudes; Elementary Secondary Education; Ethnicity; *Ethnic Origins; Family Background; Language Usage; *Mexican Americans; *Mobility; Multicultural Education; Questionnaires; Spanish Americans; *Spanish Speaking; State Surveys
IDENTIFIERS	Chicanos; *Colorado; Ethnic Heritage Studies Program Act; Hispanos; Spanish Surnamed

ABSTRACT

Three hundred twelve respondents representing a cross section of Colorado Hispanic families participated in a 1978 questionnaire survey developed by the Colorado Department of Education to assess the mobility and point of origin of the state's Hispanic population and to provide information about attitudes and feelings concerning the public school education of Hispanic students. Analysis of the data indicated: most Hispanics were not newcomers to the state (71% were born in Colorado, 42% had moved less than 50 miles from their birthplace, 53% were second generation Coloradans, and 4% of their grandparents were born in Colorado); only 6% indicated the Spanish language was never used at home, 54% always spoke Spanish with parents and relatives, and 38% sometimes spoke Spanish at home; 82% of the respondents who had originated in Colorado or New Mexico preferred to be referred to as "Spanish Americans", the majority of those who had originated from Mexico preferred the term "Mexican Americans", and 16% preferred "Chicano"; 94% favored a state bilingual/bicultural educational program with the content emphasizing culture, education, self-esteem, and Spanish language; 84% felt a multi-ethnic program for all students was needed; 42% were satisfied with the school's efforts in promoting better understanding among students of all ethnic backgrounds; and 85% felt there was a dropout problem among the Spanish surnamed. (NEC)

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ED180738

SURVEY
The Hispanic Population In Colorado

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

RC011785

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SURVEY OF THE HISPANIC POPULATION IN COLORADO

INTRODUCTION

During the summer of 1978 the Colorado Department of Education, through the Equal Educational Services Unit, conducted a statewide survey of the Hispanic population in Colorado.

The purpose of this survey was to help assess the mobility and point of origin of the Hispanic population of this state and to give more information concerning attitudes and individual feelings related to the education of Hispanic students in the public school districts throughout the state.

Initially, approximately seven hundred and twenty (720) persons were contacted either by mail (600), telephone (70) or personally (50) requesting their participation in this survey. Each representing a family member. Sixty five (65) percent male and thirty-five (35) percent female. The goal sought was to include at least eighty-five (85) percent parents with no ties to the educational process of their children and fifteen percent persons involved in some type of educational activity in the Colorado public schools. Forty-three (43) percent indicated a willingness to participate. Five (5) percent declined and the rest did not answer the letter of inquiry. A total of 312 responses were received. The great majority were parents with children in the Colorado public schools. A total of forty-eight (48) responses were received by telephone or home visits and in most cases the parents indicated this form of response rather than the written form in English.

The questionnaire was developed by Colorado Department of Education personnel as well as the strategy to be followed.

The letter of inquiry was accompanied by a self-addressed post card. Those contacted personally or by telephone did not receive the post card and only those answering affirmatively received the questionnaire.

The questionnaire was designed to extract information in at least four different areas. These are:

1. The mobility of the Spanish surnamed population now residing in Colorado as well as determining the point of origin (roots) of the participants.

2. The present use of the Spanish language and its influence on today's Hispanic student.

3. The "ethnic name" the participant prefers.

4. Specific educational concerns:
   a) State Bilingual/Bicultural programs
   b) Multi-ethnic programs in schools
   c) School's effort for better understanding our pluralistic society
   d) Dropout problem among the Hispanic children.

The method used in acquiring participant names were several:

a) School superintendents, principals and other administrators

b) Hispanic/Chicano organizations

c) Community leaders

d) Chamber of Commerce

e) Telephone directory

The number of participants to be selected was based on the city or community's Hispanic population. It is felt that a valid cross section was achieved.

Responses received included persons from all urban areas as well as communities with at least ten (10) percent Hispanic population.

PART I

Mobility or Point of Origin

1. PLACE OF BIRTH

a. Colorado 71 %
b. New Mexico 8 %
c. Mexico 6 %
d. Other 15 %

The statistics here indicate that most Hispanic people are not newcomers to the State. Neither has there been a large number of Spanish surnamed moving into the state if compared to the Colorado general population. The primary reason is that the large corporations, military, tourism related businesses and other industries that are settling in Colorado from other states are not from areas where there is a sizeable Hispanic populations or are professions in which the Spanish surnamed are extremely rare. Example: IBM (engineers, computer specialists, sales representatives, etc.) who has transferred many with these special skills from the eastern United States. We can assume that of the approximately 278,020 (1970 U. S. Census) Spanish surnamed Coloradoans there are 197,394 native born.

2. PRESENT ADDRESS

The present address (area of residence) is of little consequence other than to monitor the area in Colorado from which the responses were received. The results of this question indicated that all geographical areas of the state were well represented in this questionnaire.

3. WHERE DID YOU LIVE BEFORE THIS ADDRESS?

a. Colorado 76 %
b. New Mexico 5 %
c. Texas 4 %
d. Mexico 2 %
e. Other 13 %

Forty-two (42) percent of the Hispanic Coloradoan had moved less than fifty (50) miles from his/her place of birth. Forty-eight (38) percent had moved to one of Colorado's large urban areas further than fifty (50) miles from his/her birth place and ten (10) percent had moved from one small community to another further than fifty (50) miles away. Thirty (30) percent of those indicating as out of state residence prior to their present address were Colorado born. Most native born returning to Colorado came from : 1) California, 2) Utah and 3) the midwestern states.

4 & 5 WHERE WAS YOUR FATHER/MOTHER BORN?

	Father	Mother	Total
a. Colorado	52 %	53 %	52.5 %
b. New Mexico	19 %	22 %	20.5 %
c. Mexico	19 %	16 %	17.5 %
d. Other	10	9 %	9.5%

The survey indicates that over half (53%) claim to be at least second generation Coloradoans. Eight-three (83) percent of second generation Hispanic Coloradoans claimed the Southern Colorado/Northern New Mexico as their point of origin. The results of this survey points out strongly that the historical past and cultural roots the great majority of the Hispanic Coloradoans is centered around the Southern Colorado/Northern New Mexico Area.

6.a WHERE WAS YOUR PATERNAL GRANDFATHER/GRANDMOTHER BORN?

	Father	Mother	Total
a. Colorado	52 %	54 %	53 %
b. New Mexico	20 %	21 %	20.5%
c. Mexico	18 %	13 %	15.5%
d. Other	10 %	12 %	11 %

6.b WHERE WAS YOUR MATERNAL GRANDFATHER/GRANDMOTHER BORN?

	Father	Mother	Total
a. Colorado	47 %	43 %	45 %
b. New Mexico	20 %	22 %	21 %
c. Mexico	18 %	20 %	19 %
d. Other	15 %	15 %	15 %

6.c TOTAL OF BOTH GRANDPARENTS

	Father	Mother	Total
a. Colorado	49.5 %	48.5 %	49 %
b. New Mexico	20 %	21.5 %	20.25%
c. Mexico	18 %	16.5 %	17.75%
d. Other	12.5 %	13.5 %	13 %

The respondents indicating Mexico or Texas as their point of origin appears to have settled mostly in the northeastern part of Colorado, the large urban areas and the Arkansas Valley. Job opportunities have, of course, been the primary reason for their settling in these areas.

PART II

The purpose of this section is to determine the frequency Spanish is spoken in a family setting and to what extent the "mother language" is being replaced by English among this particular group of people. From the information gathered from this survey it is impossible to determine if the Bilingual/Bicultural programs are in any way influencing the maintenance of the Spanish language at home and in the community.

7. DO YOU SPEAK SPANISH AT HOME?

a. Always 17 % b. Sometimes 77 % c. Never 6 %

According to the responses to this question very few (6%) are the homes

where the Spanish language is never used. This appears to strengthen the theory that most Spanish surnamed children attending school have been or are influenced by a home language other than English. The part "a" (17%) is undoubtedly higher because those parents who still have some difficulty with the English language in most cases did not respond to either the letter of inquiry or the questionnaire. Telephone conversations to parents from the Denver, Adams County and Lafayette/Longmont areas tend to verify the previous statement.

8. DO YOU SPEAK SPANISH WITH YOUR PARENTS OR OTHER RELATIVES?

a. Always 54 % b. Sometimes 38 % c. Never 8 %

The response to this question indicates that the Spanish language is still very much alive among the older generations in Colorado. Because of the strong family ties among the Hispanic population the influence of the grandparents on the Hispanic school aged child should also be considered to be great. The drop of the "always" group (17% vs. 54%) is considerable, probably the greatest of any generation. If this trend continues the Spanish language as the "home language" might well disappear within the next two generations especially in the urban areas.

PART III

This section deals with probably the most talked about and least understood of all questions in this survey.

9. ORDINARILY, WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING DO YOU APPLY TO YOURSELF?

Of the total responding, seventy-two (72) percent expressed one choice,

twenty-one (21) chose two, five (5) percent chose three or more and two (2) percent none of the above.

a) Responding by one choice:

a) Spanish American	34 %	e. Latino	0 %
b) Mexican American	28 %	f. Multi-choice	0 %
c) Hispano	11 %	g. Other	5 %
d) Chicano	22 %		

b) Total respondants:

a. Spanish American	27.5 %	e. Latino	01 %
b. Mexican American	21 %	f. Multi-choice	25 %
c. Hispanic	8 %	g. Other	1.5 %
d) Chicano	16 %		

The term Hispano was used in combination with other ethnic names more often than any other. Spanish American and Mexican American appeared with Hispano more often than any other combination.

The term Spanish American was the over-whelming choice of persons whose point of origin was either Southern Colorado or New Mexico. Eighty-two (82) percent of this group indicated the Spanish American term their perference. Several expressed irritation claiming that the "militant Chicano" and the news media were imposing upon them the term Chicano against their wishes.

The majority whose point of origin was either Mexico or "other" chose the name Mexican American. Several indicated that Mexican American was "all right" but they preferred American of Mexican Descent.

Most choosing Hispano came from persons whose point of origin was either Southern Colorado/New Mexico or "other" (Illinois, Michigan, Texas, etc.). The preference for the term Chicano usually came from urban or higher education centers as well as persons involved in Bilingual/Bicultural programs, Chicano Studies, Title I, etc. Only ten (10) percent of those indicating the preference came from smaller communities and not involved in any type of educational activity.

There was some marked antagonism between some choosing Chicano and Spanish American against each other. This is, of course, an "in-house fight", but not one that should be overlooked when teaching Hispanic children or communicating with their parents.

No participant picked Latino as their one and only choice. Two (2) percent either rejected any term ("call me by my first name") or chose one not listed above, i.e., Mejicano, Raza, Gente, etc.

PART IV

Educational Concerns and Issues

This part deals with certain educational issues of importance to Spanish speaking parents and/or educators.

10. DO YOU FEEL A BILINGUAL/BICULTURAL EDUCATION PROGRAM IS NEEDED IN THE STATE?

Yes 94 % No 4 % No Opinion 2 %

More than any other question this came the closest to be unanimous among those responding to the questionnaire. While the over-whelming majority favored a Bilingual/Bicultural program for the state the

reasons given varied. These have been placed into four categories and listed in order of priority as indicated by the participant.

They are:

a) Culture 38 %

b) Education 32 %

c) Self esteem 16 %

d) Spanish language 14 %

Eleven (11) percent either did not comment on this question or gave no reason.

The support for a State Bilingual/Bicultural Program came from all geographical areas in Colorado. Many complained over a lack of interest from high school administrators and people in state government. Few, while supporting the concept were critical of their own programs.

The reasons most expressed by those who oppose the Bilingual/Bicultural program were:

a) waste of taxpayers money

b) ineffective local programs

c) not preparing the Spanish speaking child to live in an English-speaking world.

d) not addressing itself to the "real need of the Chicano people"

Those responding not of Hispanic origin expressed a strong support for this program in their comments.

II. DO YOU FEEL A MULTI-ETHNIC PROGRAM IS NEEDED IN OUR SCHOOLS?

Yes 84 % No 9 % No Opinion 7 %

The majority indicating a "yes" to this question gave the following reasons:

a) Better understanding among all citizens

b) The need to know about other people

c) Help erase stereotypes in our society, and

d) Bring all cultures to an equal status.

Those opposing this program wrote the following reasons:

a) Bilingual/Bicultural program is all we need

b) Too much to cover

c) Unrelated to what education is all about.

12. ARE YOU A MEMBER OF ANY COMMITTEE OR GROUP THAT PROMOTES THE STUDY OR BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF HISPANICS IN OUR SCHOOLS?

Yes 41 % No 59 %

The initial goal was to contact an approximate ratio of 85 vs 15 percent of non-academic oriented persons compared to persons involved in some areas of education. The result of those responding did not reflect this intent. It is, however, understandable that those involved in the education of the Colorado Hispanic Child would be more willing to answer the questionnaire.

13. ARE YOU SATISIFIED WITH OUR SCHOOL'S EFFORTS IN PROMOTING BETTER UNDERSTANDING AMONG STUDENTS OF ALL ETHNIC BACKGROUNDS?

Yes 42 % No 42 % No Opinion 16 %

Persons responding "yes" to this question often expressed satisfaction with their own individual schools but were critical with the total district or central administrator's efforts in promoting better understanding among all students. Persons involved in the Bilingual/ Bicultural and Title I programs tended to be more satisfied with their schools's effort.

Participants answering "no" blamed primarily school administrators and secondly, teachers. The word "racist" appeared only three times in the questionnaire. The words "not sensitive" or "not caring" were most commonly used to describe the problem within their school district.

Many felt that there was a great need for inservice training for teachers and administrators.

Whether the response was "yes" or "no" most indicated that progress is being made, the difference was that some were satisfied with the general progress and hoped it would continue and others considered the progress too slow and wanted to see the district exert more effort.

There was no significant difference on "yes" or "no" between geographical areas in the state or between persons involved in education those who are not.

The only perceivable difference came from groups relating to the ethnic term preferred, i.e.;

Spanish American	Yes	48 %	No	34 %	No opinion	18 %
Chicano	Yes	30 %	No	62 %	No opinion	8 %

14. DO YOU FEEL THERE IS A DROPOUT PROBLEM AMONG THE SPANISH SURNAMED?

Yes 85 % No 12 % No opinion 3 %

Most persons commented on this question (87% did) and placed the blame on three general services. There were:

a) The Schools (48%) of those responding--"yes". The blame was placed on the entire school system, school administrators, teachers, and counselors. Very few (mostly school personnel) indicated that the school counselors were not doing their job. The lack of blaming counselors by parents not involved in education might suggest that there is very little understanding of the role the counselor in the education of their child (subsequent telephone calls seemed to confirm this).

Most in this category expressed the opinion that the school system simply doesn't care what happens to the Hispanic student or is outright antagonistic toward the "Mexican student". Several saw some improvement and expressed hope for more improvement, even though, the schools still have a "long way to go" before this problem could be solved.

The majority expressed a sense of frustration and only very few were outright incensed with their school system.

b) Home Environment (25% of those responding "yes"). Most educators blamed home attitudes as the primary reason for the dropout problem in their schools.

However, the most emphatic in blaming parents or home environment came from several not involved in education. The expression, "if parents would only understand the value of education", was repeated many times. Many expressed irritation at parents who don't encourage their children to continue school or at parents who have lost complete control of the children and put the sole burden of education upon the schools.

c) Student attitudes (27% of those responding "yes"). Again, many educators felt strongly that the student must assume more responsibility for his/her education.

The reasons expressed for this problem were:

1. lack of self-discipline
2. poor attitude toward schools
3. truancy
4. peer pressure

While most did not absolve the school system or the home from total blame, twenty-seven (27) percent of those responding "yes" to this question made it very clear that students are not taking their education responsibilities seriously. Many were dismayed that schools should be given all the blame for their students' failures.

CONCLUSION

The Survey-The Hispanic Population in Colorado was a three-month long effort by the Colorado Department of Education plus twenty-six (26) other persons, organizations and Chambers of Commerce throughout the State of Colorado. Participation and responses came from all areas of the state that registers more than ten (10) percent of citizens of Hispanic descent.

Subsequent reviews and discussions on this survey demonstrate that question #9 (Ordinarily, which of the following do you apply to yourself...etc.) is the section that prompted the most debate among Hispanic people. Those preferring the term Chicano have been the most vocal. One argument they present is that students (high school and college) overwhelmingly prefer to be known as Chicano and this was not indicated in the survey. Some have expressed concern that this document could well be used to do battle to the Chicano movement in Colorado.

While these concerns are respected it must be pointed out that several persons who were active Chicano members in colleges and universities during the late sixties and early seventies chose Spanish or Mexican-American as their choice. Those active in the Chicano movement during this period who chose such professions as college counselors, Bilingual/Bicultural Educators, Colorado Migrant Council, etc. often preferred the term Chicano.

It was not the intent of this study to justify, promote or expose any group according to the ethnic term preferred. The purpose was to inform the public on issues, concerns and the mobility factor of the Hispanic population of Colorado.

Any decision on how this information will be interpreted, used or disseminated will be the responsibility of the individual school districts or communities receiving this report.

Again, it should be clearly understood that this questionnaire was directed primarily to parents of children attending the Colorado public schools and not at college level.

This survey and materials were produced in part by financial assistance from a grant from the U. S. Office of Education, Department of Health, Education and Welfare. The opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the U. S. Office of Education and no official endorsement by the U. S. Office of Education should be inferred. (45-CFR-184)

APPENDIX I

COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
State Office Building, 201 E. Colfax
Denver, Colorado 80203
Telephone (303) 839-2212

Calvin M. Frazier, Commissioner

June 19, 1978

Dear Friend
Apreciado amigo/amiga

The purpose of this letter is to interest you in a state-wide survey that will help us determine certain aspects of the Hispanic culture in Colorado. This information will help us develop a Multi-cultural Program that will present the contributions of the Mexican American to all school districts in Colorado.

The questionnaire will also help assess the mobility factor of the State's Hispanic people; as well as establishing their particular heritage in Colorado or any other state. We hope to learn from the survey the various opinions from the Spanish speaking community on such subjects as the Bilingual/Bicultural Education Programs, Ethnic Heritage Studies and other views concerning the public school handling of cultural differences of the Hispanic people.

If you are interested in participating in this survey, please fill out the enclosed post card, writing your name and address so you may receive the questionnaire promptly. Also, indicate on your card if you are interested in receiving a copy of the results of the survey.

Please feel assured that your answers will be kept in strict confidence and will not be used for any other purpose other than the one stated above.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Roger D. Martinez, Consultant
Community Services Unit
(303) 839-2166

RM:rm

APPENDIX II

1. Place of birth: _____ (city) _____ (state or country)

2. Present address: _____ (city) _____ (state or country)

3. Where did you live before this address? _____ (city) _____ (state or country)

4. Where was your father born? _____ (city) _____ (state or country)

5. Where was your mother born? _____ (city) _____ (state or country)

6. Where was your paternal grandfather born? _____ (city) _____ (state or country)

   Where was your paternal grandmother born? _____ (city) _____ (state or country)

   Where was your maternal grandfather born? _____ (city) _____ (state or country)

   Where was your maternal grandmother born? _____ (city) _____ (state or country)

7. Do you speak Spanish at home? _____ (always) _____ (sometimes) _____ (never)

8. Do you speak Spanish with your parents or other relatives? _____ (always) _____ (sometimes) _____ (never)

9. Ordinarily, which one of the following do you apply to yourself?

   a. _____ Spanish American; b. _____ Mexican American; c. _____ Hispano;
   d. _____ Chicano; e. _____ Latino; or other _____

10. Do you feel a Bilingual Bicultural program is needed in the state? Yes ____ No ____

    Reason(s) _____

11. Do you feel a Multi-Ethnic Heritage Program is needed in our schools? Yes ___ No ___

    Reason(s) _____

12. Are you a member of any committee or group that promotes the study or better understanding of Hispanics in our schools? Yes ____ No ____

    Name of Committee/Group: _____

13. Are you satisfied with your school's effort in promoting better understanding among students of all ethnic backgrounds? Yes __ No __ Reason(s) _____

14. Do you feel there is a dropout problem among the Spanish surnamed students in our schools? Yes ____ No ____ If so, why? _____

Please use other side for additional comments.

_____ Signature (Optional)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Equal Education Services Unit staff expresses its deep appreciation to the many school personnel, community persons and organizations throughout Colorado who provided information, names and advice during the course of this study. In particular the staff thanks the following for their post survey evaluation and many suggestions in making this document final.

Dr. Roslyn M. Grady	Director, Planning and Evaluation
Lawrence Martinez	Supervisor, Bilingual Education, Foreign Language, K-12
Fred Arguello	Principal - Bristol Elementary School
Carlos Abeyta	Supervisor, Pupil Personnel
Gloria Maynard	Instructional Specialist
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Corpus Gallegos	Principal - Washington Elementary
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Trini Jackson	Teacher, 5th grade Bristol Elementary
Phil Gallegos	Principal - Lowell Elementary School
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1978 - 1980 EDUCATIONAL PRIORITIES

AS ADOPTED BY THE COLORADO STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

IMPROVEMENT OF BASIC SKILLS:

The Colorado Department of Education, through the accountability process and other proven methods, will help schools analyze and improve student skills in reading, writing, speaking, listening and mathematics.

IMPROVEMENT OF DISCIPLINE IN SCHOOLS:

The Department will assist schools to achieve a learning climate for improved student discipline to enhance the learning process.

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The Department will assist schools and districts by coordinating and integrating state, local and federal programs to maximize their effectiveness in research, evaluation, and planning for effective use of financial and human resources.